

H. Res. 695

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

July 22, 2004.

Whereas Mattie Stepanek was born on July 17, 1990, and was raised in Rockville, Maryland;

Whereas Mattie Stepanek had mitochondrial myopathy, a rare form of muscular dystrophy that affects heart rate, breathing, and digestion;

Whereas in 2002, 2003, and 2004, Mattie Stepanek served as the National Goodwill Ambassador for the Muscular Dystrophy Association (MDA), appearing with MDA National Chairman Jerry Lewis on the MDA Labor Day Telethon;

Whereas Mattie Stepanek was able to fulfill three of his dreams by publishing a book of poetry, meeting his hero, former President Jimmy Carter, and meeting Oprah Winfrey;

Whereas Mattie Stepanek has written five books of poetry, including *Heartsongs*, *Journey Through Heartsongs*, *Hope Through Heartsongs*, *Celebrate Through Heartsongs*, and *Loving Through Heartsongs*;

Whereas the poetry books written by Mattie Stepanek have sold more than 500,000 copies;

Whereas by the age of 13, Mattie Stepanek reached an 11th grade education level through home schooling; and

Whereas on June 22, 2004, Mattie Stepanek lost his fight with muscular dystrophy at Children's National Medical Center in Washington, District of Columbia: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its condolences to the family and friends of Mattie Stepanek on his passing; and

(2) honors the life of Mattie Stepanek for his braveness, generosity of spirit, and efforts to raise awareness of muscular dystrophy.

Attest:

Clerk.